

Social history is the study of ordinary people's lives. To incorporate social history into genealogy, consider questions beyond names and dates. Research what life was like for your ancestor, what they ate, what they wore, how did they go about their everyday life, what was a typical day like, etc.? Social history adds context to your ancestor's life and/or it leads to additional records.

Social history research uses:

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ✓ Traditional genealogical sources | ✓ Photographs |
| ✓ Manuscript collections | ✓ Newspapers |
| ✓ Ephemera | ✓ Diaries, journals and letters |
| ✓ Books | ✓ Interviews |

General Resources

What is social history? <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/what-social-history>

What is social history? <https://www.legacytree.com/blog/what-is-social-history>

100 websites for social history: <http://philibertfamily.blogspot.com/2012/08/100-social-history-websites.html>

American history web sites and resources: <https://besthistorysites.net/american-history/> See links for specific time periods and topics

Discovering American women's history: <https://digital.mtsu.edu/digital/collection/women>

Tracing women by understanding social history: [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Tracing_Women_by_Understanding_Social_History_\(National_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Tracing_Women_by_Understanding_Social_History_(National_Institute))

International Association of Labour History Institutions social history portal: archives, libraries, document centers, museums and research institutions specializing in heritage, history and theory of labor and social movements (world-wide): <https://socialhistoryportal.org/>

Library of Congress social history: <https://www.cyndislist.com/us/loc/social-history/>

American Social History Project: <https://shec.ashp.cuny.edu/>

The social historian <http://www.thesocialhistorian.com/>

Use google to search for specific historic events and/or first-person accounts

Oral history and interviews, social networking: <https://www.cyndislist.com/oral/social/>

Old magazine articles <http://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/home.php>

Social networking, general resources: <https://www.cyndislist.com/social-networking/general/>

Programmer, created by US Farm Safety Administration and Office of War Information: search 170,000 1935-1943 photos <https://www.photogrammar.org/maps>

New York Public Library digital collection, covers more than NYC area: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/>

Digital Public Library of America <https://dp.la/>

DoHistory <http://dohistory.org/>

Put ancestors into historical perspective by adding life events and produce integrated timeline with historical events along with ancestor's life (many genealogy software programs also offer this feature) <http://www.ourtimelines.com>

Eyewitness to history <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/index.html>

History, Biography, Genealogy Research Books

Book not available to read in full online for free? Try <https://www.worldcat.org/> to see if it's available through inter-library loan

Biographies, location specific: <https://www.cyndislist.com/biographies/locality/>
Free genealogy books online: <http://genealogysearch.org/free/digitalpublications.html>
Familysearch digital library: <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/>
Google books <https://lialisson.com/free-google-books-for-genealogy-research/>
Digitized materials, including websites, software applications/games, music, movies/videos, moving images, and millions of books <https://archive.org/index.php>

Oral Histories and First-Person Narratives

Oral histories and interviews, general resources: <https://www.cyndislist.com/oral/general/>
Southern history, personal letters, oral history, maps, photographs: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/>
Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1940, including first person narratives: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/>
The Dust Bowl, autobiographies and oral histories: <https://libguides.tccd.edu/c.php?g=240523&p=1609055>
Oral histories, Ellis Island <https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/historyculture/oral-histories.htm>
Their own words: <http://deila.dickinson.edu/theirownwords/searchbooks.htm>

Queries and Message Boards

Ancestry and rootsweb message boards (free): <https://www.ancestry.com/boards/>
Long lost family bulletin board: http://www.yourfamily.com/lost_family.html
Queries and message boards general resources: <https://www.cyndislist.com/queries/general/>
GenForum, free genealogy message board <https://www.genealogy.com/forum/>
The Genealogy Message Board: <http://www.yourfamily.com/genealogy.html>
Village by village contact site for local history in the UK and Ireland: <https://curiousfox.com/>
Free UK-based genealogy message board: <https://www.rootschat.com/>

Historic Disasters, Events, and Tragic Accidents

Search disasters by type and location: <http://www.gendisasters.com/>
Historic disasters, events, and tragic accidents: https://www.genealoger.com/genealogy/gen_disasters.htm
Disasters that touched our ancestors' lives, search by type of disaster, date, and/or place (US and Canada): <http://www.gendisasters.com/>
Disasters: natural and man-made: <https://www.cyndislist.com/disasters/>
Worst man-made disasters in recent history: <https://www.insider.com/worst-modern-manmade-disasters-world-environment-day-2019-5>
Deadliest natural disasters by type: <https://www.titlemax.com/discovery-center/lifestyle/deadliest-natural-disasters-by-type/>
Deadliest natural disasters in US history: <https://www.history.com/news/deadliest-natural-disasters-us-storm-flood-hurricane-fire>
Ten deadliest world natural disasters: <https://www.livescience.com/33316-top-10-deadliest-natural-disasters.html>

Mining Accidents/Disasters

Worldwide mining accidents: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining_accident
Worldwide worst coal mining accidents: <https://www.mining-technology.com/features/feature-world-worst-coal-mining-disasters-china/>

Eight of the worst coal mining disasters: <https://www.nsenergybusiness.com/features/worst-coal-mining-disasters/#>

World's deadliest mine disasters: <http://www.rmmagazine.com/2014/08/01/worlds-deadliest-mine-disasters/>

Coal and metal and non metal mine accident resources by state: https://usminedisasters.miningquiz.com/Mine_Disasters/state_mining_fatality_resources.htm

UK coalmining accidents and deaths: <http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/site/disasters/>

Mine disasters in the United Kingdom: <http://www.mineaccidents.com.au/mine-events/disaster/gb>

600,000 mining accidents in US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia:

<https://miningaccidents.weebly.com/>

List of articles on West Virginia coal mine disasters which can be found in the vertical newspaper clipping files at the West Virginia State Archives Library:

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/notewv/coalminedisasters.html>

Pennsylvania coal mining records: <https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Research-Online/Pages/Coal-Miner-Records.aspx>

Specific Events and Eras

National World War I Museum <https://www.theworldwar.org/>

Green's Dictionary of Slang <https://greensdictofslang.com/>

Smithsonian magazine The History of the Flapper <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-history-of-the-flapper-part-1-a-call-for-freedom-11957978/>

America in the 1930s <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/front.html>

Civil War surgery: <http://www.historynet.com/the-truth-about-civil-war-surgery-2.htm>

What did you do in the war Grandma? (WWII) <http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/wwii/women/toccs.html>

Victoriana: the 19th century online <http://www.victoriana.com/>

19th century American children and what they read <http://www.merrycoz.org/kids.xhtml>

Food and Fashion

Feeding America: The Historic American Cookbook Project

<http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/cookbooks/index.cfm>

Fashion Era <http://www.fashion-era.com/>

Vintage Patterns Wiki http://vintagepatterns.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

Recipe Curio <http://recipecurio.com/>

History of wigs http://www.randomhistory.com/2009/02/24_wigs.html

Groceteria. supermarket history <http://www.groceteria.com/>

Historic Catalogs of Sears, Roebuck and Co., 1896-1993 ([Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com))

<https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1670>

Sears Archives <http://searsarchives.com/>

Miscellaneous, from Colonial Period to WWII

Agricultural and farm innovations <https://www.thoughtco.com/history-of-agriculture-and-farm-machinery-4074382>

American House Styles from This Old House

<http://www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/photos/0,,1228909,00.html>

Brief history of the ground fishing industry in New England

<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/history/stories/groundfish/grndfsh1.html>

Click Americana <https://clickamericana.com/>

Common-Place <http://www.common-place.org/>

Digital archive of American Architecture http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/cas/fnart/fa267/

Ephemera Society of America <http://www.ephemerasyociety.org/>

Flickr The Commons <http://www.flickr.com/commons>

Garbage timeline <http://www.astc.org/exhibitions/rotten/timeline.htm>

GenWriters <http://www.genwriters.com/>

History of American education web project <http://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/>

History of sanitary sewers <http://www.sewerhistory.org/>

Library of Congress-Digital Collections <https://www.loc.gov/collections/> National

Museum of Civil War Medicine <http://www.civilwarmed.org/> America's

Quilting History <http://www.womenfolk.com/historyofquilts/> Lowell Mill Girls

http://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher/Mill_girls.htm

David Rumsey Map Collection <https://www.davidrumsey.com/>

Library of Congress-Performing Arts Encyclopedia <http://www.loc.gov/performingarts/>

Memorial Hall Museum online <http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/home.html>

National Museum of Funeral History <http://www.nmfh.org/>

Online guide to traditional games <http://www.tradgames.org.uk/index.html>

[PhotoTree.com](http://www.phototree.com) <http://www.phototree.com/>

Pictorial history of Kentucky coal mining <http://kycoal.homestead.com/>

Shorpy Photo Archive <http://www.shorpy.com/>

Story of farming <http://historylink101.com/lessons/farm-city/story-of-farming.htm>

Tax history museums <http://www.taxhistory.org/www/website.nsf/Web/TaxHistoryMuseum>

Tenement Museum <http://www.tenement.org/>

The Workhouse <http://www.workhouses.org.uk/>

Union Pacific Railroad-past and present railroad job descriptions

<https://www.up.com/heritage/history/past-present-jobs/index.htm>

Yale Law School –The Avalon Project <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp>

Social Media

Free webinar, [Ancestry Academy - Cousin Bait: Make Social Media Work for You](#): explores what to find on Facebook and Twitter. as well as other less obvious places to search

419-page file with 16,000+ links (updated May 2020) to English-speaking genealogy- and history-related **Facebook** pages/groups, as well as links to Canadian and Australian genealogy FB groups
<https://moonswings.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/genealogy-on-facebook-may-2020.pdf>

FB groups such as Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness (US and world), Random Acts of Photo Restoration, Obituary Look-ups, and Genealogy Translations may be particularly helpful; also city/county/regional genealogy groups.